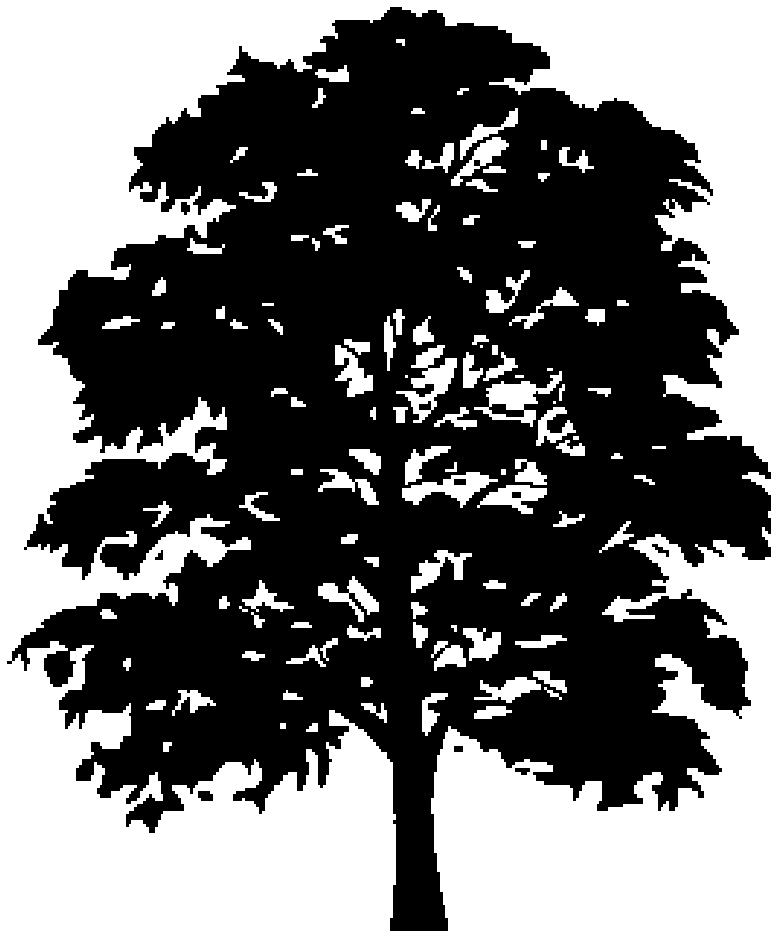


**TOMPKINS COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
2001 ANNUAL REPORT**



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TOMPKINS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL 2001 Annual Report

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Tompkins County Environmental Management Council (EMC) was created and is funded by the County Board of Representatives (BOR). One of the principal charges of the EMC is to advise the BOR on matters affecting the preservation, development and use of the natural features of the County. Staff and equipment are shared between the EMC and the Tompkins County Planning Department. In 2001, the EMC reported directly to the BOR's Planning Committee. County Representative Dooley Kiefer served as the BOR's liaison to the EMC.

Susan Brock served a second term as Chair of the EMC in 2001. Ms. Brock reported to the Planning Committee on the EMC's activities and goals for the year. She also drafted correspondence on behalf of the EMC and served as the group's primary liaison to the BOR.

Mikel Shakarjian, after serving as EMC Coordinator since April 1999, took a new position in County Administration. In her role as EMC Coordinator, Ms. Shakarjian helped coordinate EMC activities with other governmental advisory boards, County departments and the BOR. Ms. Shakarjian also served on the Board of Directors for the New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils. The EMC wishes to thank Ms. Shakarjian for her efforts on behalf of the EMC.

The EMC was fortunate to have the assistance of three interns in 2001. Erin Wilson supported the Council as an intern

from September 1999 until she graduated in May 2001. Scott Estro provided support during the summer and Gwen Fay for the rest of the year.

The EMC News completed its eighth year of publication in 2001. The *News* updates members and interested parties on the activities of the EMC.

EMC members participated on the Council by attending monthly general meetings, working in task-oriented committees, and serving as liaisons for other committees or organizations. Six committees were formed in 2001: County Towers, Education, Environmental Review, Executive, Pesticide Neighbor Notification, and Water Resources.

RESOLUTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

The EMC passed nine resolutions in 2001. The first was passed in March and was titled "Resolution for Participating in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign." It asked the Board of Representatives to join the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP). ICLEI is an international organization whose goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions locally around the world. In May of 2001, the BOR adopted a resolution joining ICLEI's CCP program. ICLEI then funded an intern position over the summer to complete the Tompkins County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report. The report will serve as a baseline tool for other milestones: determining an emissions reduction target and developing and implementing a local action plan.

The second resolution passed in April and was titled “Recommending President Bush Reconsider Federal Policy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Coal-Fired Power Plants.” It asked for President Bush’s support of the U.N. Convention on Climate Change and urged him to stand behind his campaign commitment to reduce carbon dioxide emissions for coal-fired power generating plants. As a result, the BOR passed Resolution No. 91 “Recommending President Bush Reconsider Federal Policy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Coal-Fired Power Plants.”

The third resolution, drafted by the Environmental Review Committee, passed in June and was titled “Recommending Cornell University Select the Site Remediation Alternative Offering the Highest Degree of Permanence.” It urged the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to select Alternative 6 rather than its preferred Alternative 2 of the Proposed Remediation Action Plan for Cornell University’s Radiation Disposal Site. The EMC supported this alternative because it offered the highest degree of permanence.

The fourth resolution was passed in June in recognition of Gary Hotaling for his outstanding contribution providing loyal service and wise counsel as a member of the EMC for the past seventeen years. The resolution was framed and presented to his family.

In July, the fifth resolution passed and was titled “Recommending U.S.D.A. Forest Service Select Alternative No.3, No Surface Occupancy on National Forest Lands or Split Estates, Which Protects the Natural Resource (Finger Lakes National Forest) While Permitting Leasing of and Revenue from Mineral Rights.” The resolution was drafted by the Environmental Review Committee, which determined that Alternative No. 3 provided the strongest overall environmental

protection to the national forest without loss of revenue to federal, state and local governments. The BOR passed resolution No. 159 in July supporting these findings.

The sixth resolution passed in September in appreciation of James Hanson, upon his retirement, for eleven years of demonstrated enthusiastic dedication towards public service as Tompkins County’s Commissioner of Planning.

The seventh resolution passed in November and was titled “Appropriation of the NYS Environmental Protection Fund During Fiscal Year 2001-2002.” This resolution was forwarded to State legislators urging appropriation of funds that support important programs such as open space acquisition, the Hudson River Estuary Program, and hazardous waste programs.

The last two resolutions were passed in December. The eighth resolution was titled “Resolution Recommending General Policy on Gas/Oil Leasing Proposals on County Land.” The Environmental Review Committee of the EMC developed generic recommendations to guide the County in evaluating future oil and gas leasing proposals.

The final resolution was drafted by the Environmental Review Committee and urged Congress not to support reauthorization of the Price Anderson Act of 1957, which established a liability cap well below the compensation needed to cover most serious nuclear accident consequences associated with the nuclear power industry. The EMC believes risks to the environment associated with nuclear power are well documented and the nuclear industry should be held accountable for the real cost of doing business. The resolution was forwarded to the Board of Representatives and U.S. Congressional representatives.

The EMC also sent official correspondence on the following issues:

- ❑ Supporting Burn Barrel legislation in New York State.
- ❑ Illustrating the key issues and funding needs for Environmental Management Councils.
- ❑ Offering guidance in choosing the appropriate pesticide application with attention to the senior population at Kendal.
- ❑ Requesting that DEC provide a public comment period for oil and gas leasing on State lands.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- ❑ EMC members toured the Cornell Lake Source Cooling plant on May 5th. Members commented that many of the concerns they raised about the facility during the SEQRA process had been addressed in its final design.
- ❑ A representative from the EMC participated in the Vital Communities workshop and planning session.
- ❑ In July the EMC co-sponsored the *Municipal Wireless Planning Workshop* with the Tompkins County Municipal Officials Association and the Tompkins County Board of Representatives. The California based consultants, Kreines and Kreines, answered questions about how municipalities can plan for the wireless explosion and work together.
- ❑ In the fall, EMC members donated to the Cayuga Waterfront Trail Stepping Stone campaign. Thanks to generous member donations, the council raised \$250 to purchase a cornerstone on the trail that will display the EMC's name.
- ❑ In November several EMC members attended the annual New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils conference in Saratoga Springs. The conference gave them an opportunity to exchange ideas

with members of other EMCs and Conservation Advisory Councils. Mikel Shakarjian, the EMC Coordinator, also gave a well-received presentation on the Tompkins County Unique Natural Areas survey.

SPECIAL MEETINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

Roadside and Streambank Erosion

Inventory: on March 14th David Zorn from the Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization discussed the Roadside and Streambank Erosion Inventory conducted during the summer of 2000. The inventory documented the extent of erosion and sedimentation and will guide recommendations for the Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan. A copy of the document was provided for the EMC Library.

Water Resources Issues and

Organizations: on March 14th and April 11th Kate Hackett, Tompkins County Water Resources Planner, spoke about water resources issues and organizations. She asked for EMC support in educating municipalities about the importance of aquifers and water quality.

Treman Marina Dog Park: on April 11th Heather Hofmeister (TCDog) and EMC member Herb Engman led a discussion regarding the proposed off-leash dog park at Allan H. Treman State Marine Park.

Cornell Radiation Disposal Site: on May 9th Donna Connery (Cornell) and Martin Brand (DEC) summarized the history of Cornell's Radiation Disposal Site, the scenarios for remediation that were evaluated to comply with the DEC's consent order, and the Proposed Remedial Action Plan.

Management of State Forests: on September 12th Dave Forness, DEC Region 7 Supervising Forester, spoke about his work developing a Forest Management Plan that

will include the Danby State Forest. The objectives of the plan are to provide for timber production and forest health, recreation, and watershed protection using an ecosystem approach.

Vital Communities Initiative: on October 10th, Kate Hackett and Tom Mank, from the Tompkins County Planning Department, gave a presentation on the Vital Communities Initiative. This is part of a wider public outreach campaign to involve the public in guiding future growth and development.

Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions: On November 14th Gwen Fay, Cities for Climate Protection and EMC Intern, presented her report on the Tompkins County Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The inventory was a joint project of Tompkins County and the Cities for Climate Protection and will serve as a tool for choosing an emissions reduction target and developing and implementing a local action plan.

Purchase of Development Rights: On November 14th George Frantz, of George Frantz and Associates, discussed the feasibility study and potential uses of Purchase of Development Rights for land conservation and protection in Tompkins County. Mr. Frantz discussed the Tompkins County Natural Resources Inventory that was completed to inform this project.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Executive Committee

Susan Brock, representing the Executive Committee and EMC as a whole, participated in the search process for a new Commissioner of Planning. This included identification of desired qualities and attributes, screening and interviewing candidates, and making a recommendation to the County Administrator as to the group's preferred candidate.

Education Committee

The Education Committee had another very busy year. The committee's major accomplishments included publication of the Land Preservation Options brochure, development of the Unique Natural Areas (UNA) display, identification of a new UNA between Mitchell Street and Pine Tree Road, and initiation of the process for sponsoring a municipal trash cleanup in each municipality. Education Committee members attended the annual New York State Association of EMCs Conference where their projects were well received.

The committee also participated in the 2001 Earth Day celebration volunteering a display table which received very positive input from the public. They continued revising the 1996 Environmental Directory and continued work on the EMC Website. Both projects are expected to be completed in 2002. They worked with the Library Solar Panels display that is now up and running and would like to have the display provide more information about how much electricity is produced for the day/month/year of the panels. The committee continues to gather information on the Burn Barrel Law and provide support on this issue. They are also pursuing EMC participation in the Adopt-A-Highway Program.

County Towers Committee

The County Towers Committee continued its efforts working with the Communications Capital Projects Committee of the BOR to identify environmental issues related to the County's emergency communication system. The committee provided comments to the County on the draft scope for the project's Environmental Impact Statement. A member of the committee attended meetings between a County consultant (NYSTEC) and County officials on the project, meetings to develop the functional specifications for the project's Request for Proposals, and presentations by vendors on current technologies that could

meet the County's needs. In addition, municipal officials received an updated list of towers and other tall structures in the County to use as they evaluate requests for new cell phone towers.

Pesticide Neighbor Notification Committee

The Pesticide Neighbor Notification Committee continued to research information concerning the State's Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law that enables counties to opt in without any modifications to the current statute. The committee also studied the results of opt-in by other counties that have already implemented the law. The committee favors passing the Neighborhood Notification law and will work towards these ends in 2002.

Water Resources Committee

The Water Resources Committee discussed the Jacksonville Water District this year. The committee met for only part of the year due to the redundancy of projects contemplated between this committee and the Tompkins County Water Resources Council. The EMC holds a seat on the Water Resources Council and may continue to address water resource issues in this capacity.

Environmental Review Committee

Barbara Ebert served as chair for the fifth year in 2001 and Herb Engman served as vice chair. Steve Uzmann assumed the duties of chair in September after Barbara stepped down due to other commitments. The committee met every month except December, worked on four of the resolutions passed by the EMC, and submitted a number of recommendations to the Planning Committee of the BOR and letters to the appropriate review bodies regarding numerous project reviews.

Some of the issues the committee commented on included:

- Red Mill Bridge (Town of Dryden)
- Southwest Natural Area Master Plan
- Lansing Water District
- Cornell University Veterinary Medicine Waste Management Facility
- Tops Plaza
- Dog Park proposals in the South West Natural Area and Allen Treman Park
- Elmira Road Shopping Center Site Plan
- Six Point Traffic Plan (City of Ithaca)
- Oil and Gas leasing on County lands
- Region 7 Draft Recreation Master Plan for State Forests

The committee also reviewed, but took no action on, the Cornell University West Campus Residential Initiative, the Pilot Green Design Initiative, the Danby Town Park, the Black Diamond Trail, the County's Purchase of Development Rights study, and the Tompkins County Airport Obstruction Removal project.

EMC LIAISONS

EMC members served as liaisons to the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, Cayuga Lake Waterfront Revitalization Plan, Cornell Community Waste Management Advisory Committee, Cornell Lake Source Cooling Data Sharing Group, Flood Hazard Mitigation Oversight Committee, Intermunicipal Organization for Cayuga Lake Management Plan, and the Tompkins County Water Resources Council. Liaisons attended and participated in meetings, and reported back to the EMC.



2001 EMC Membership Roster

Appointed EMC Members and Representation

Robert Ascher	At-Large
Susan Brock	At-Large
Kenneth Christianson	At-Large
Barbara Ebert	At-Large
Karen Edelstein	At-Large
Herb Engman	At-Large
John Kiefer	At-Large
Sarah Fern Striffler	At-Large
Steven Uzmann	At-Large
Roger Yonkin	At-Large
Stephen Nicholson	Town of Caroline
Robert Roe	Town of Danby
Joyce Gerbasi	Town of Dryden
Darrel Clark	Town of Enfield
Bill Lesser	Town of Ithaca
Larry Sharpsteen	Town of Lansing
Donna Jean Darling	Town of Newfield
Jean Foley	Town of Ulysses
Jeff Cox	Village of Cayuga Heights
Bruce Johnson	Village of Freeville
Tony Zarachowicz	Village of Groton
John Dennis	Village of Lansing

Associate Members

Ron Beloin	Gay Nicholson
Walter Buble	Hans van Binsbergen
Roxana Bahar Hewertson	David Weinstein
Lynn Leopold	

Ex-Officio Members

Dooley Kiefer	Board of Representatives Liaison
Steve Maybee	Department of Environmental Health

EMC Staff

Mikel Shakarjian	EMC Coordinator
Tom Mank	EMC Coordinator
Dariele Drake	EMC Secretary
Kathy Wilsea	EMC Secretary
Erin Wilson	EMC Intern
Scott Estro	EMC Intern (summer)
Gwen Fay	EMC Intern (fall)